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Guest columnist

LaRouche philosophy defies political analysis

WASHINGTON — The roots of Lyndon LaRouche, leader of a dozen fringe organizations, are clear, even though his gyrations on the political scene are baffling.

He was reared in a Quaker family in New Hampshire and was what we would now call a peacenik at the beginning of World War II, when he enlisted and saw service overseas.

He then plunged into the left wing as a Trotskyite but soon split with his comrades and started on a career of disruption, adopting the name of Lyn Marcus (Lenin plus Marx).

One of LaRouche's early ruses was called the U.S. Labor Party. He organized cadres in several states and filed candidates for public office in Republican primaries.

As his political activity increased, he developed a pattern of entering his candidates in the Democratic Party, calling his scattered followers the national Democratic Policy Committee — a thinly disguised attempt at confusing himself with the long-established Democratic Party.

He ran for president in 1976, 1980, and 1984 and is getting ready for 1988.

Before gaining national attention with recent victories in the badly split Illinois Democratic primary — his followers won nominations for lieutenant governor and secretary of state — his cadres had picked up a few votes here and there in more than 100 elections. This year, there may be as many as 750 LaRouche candidates in more than half the states.

Now there is great interest in this weird sort of chameleon, many trying to dismiss him as some kind of lunatic.

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LaRouche's growth has been accomplished with organized cadres, armed lieutenants, brainwashing and terrorism — the latter ranging from harassing phone calls to actual violence against dissenters.

He once sent recruits to a paramilitary training camp in Georgia.

He is rejected as disreputable by all factions, but he gained considerable respectability from being received occasionally by top officials of our CIA and the National Security Council — because, they explain, his worldwide intelligence network is good enough to be listened to.

Although LaRouche's party line is subject to change, it has long been anti-Semitic — he claims that the Nazis "only" killed "about a million and a half" Jews — and built on conspiracy theories against the Rockefellers, Henry Kissinger, and the Queen of England.

Besides his baffling ideology — which rambles on incessantly and often defies analysis — the question of LaRouche's financing has never been solved.

Experts think he makes some profit from his publications, from dues, and much more from several computer technology firms he started years ago; but these do not add up to the millions of dollars he obviously puts out.

For example, after living modestly in the USA and in Germany, he now occupies a large estate in the hunt country near Leesburg, Va. — surrounded by armed sentries.

If he is crazy, he is crazy like a fox.